

**Board of Health Meeting
March 9, 2004**

PRESENT: David Osler, M.D., Chairman
Babette Mello, Member
Cecilia Sosa-Patterson, Member
Jack Vondras, Health Department Director
Cesar Pungirum, Tobacco Control Program

Dr. Osler called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

Accept Minutes:

The January 8, 2004 minutes were tabled for acceptance at the March meeting due to the fact that in February a vote could not be taken because Ms. Patterson was not present and Ms. Mello had not yet been appointed to the Board. After review Ms. Patterson amended page three, paragraph 6 with reference to the protocol of Board Members making inquiries at the Law Department. It was clarified that Board Members *can* individually contact the Law Office. Dr. Osler made the motion to accept and it was passed two to zero. Ms. Mello abstained.

The February 12, 2004 minutes were reviewed and upon motion by Ms. Mello it was voted to accept the minutes as presented two to zero. Ms. Patterson abstained.

Tobacco:

Cesar Pungirum reported that two rounds of tobacco compliance checks had occurred in December and February respectively. These visitations found two establishments with third time violations that warrant suspension hearings. The hearings will take place on April 22, 2004 @ 4:30P.M in the conference room at 50 Evergreen Ave..

Cesar also reported that Revere passed a smoking ban on February 19, 2004 which will take place no later than August 1, 2004 unless the State-wide ban takes effect before the proposed date.

Cambridge had no violations during inspections, but it was noted that some establishments had only one no-smoking sign when two are required. Also noted was that there have been complaints from Cambridge saying that smoking is ongoing in some Somerville establishments.

Cesar, accompanied by another Enforcement Officer and a Police Escort, inspected 9 bars on Friday, (3/15/04) and fined three establishments for smoking violations:

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| The Tir Na Nog | \$50.00 |
| Michael's Bar | \$50.00 |
| Coleman's Cafe | \$50.00 |

Cesar also stated that he's received several reports that Tir Na Nog regularly puts out ashtrays for its patrons. Cesar also reported that one of the owners offered to give him a fifty-dollar check on the spot for payment of the ticket issued. Of course this was dismissed but well noted.

Discussion followed relative to setting up a Public Hearing pertaining to the smoking ban. Ms. Patterson wanted a clear and concise definition as to how the hearing will be billed. Conversations ensued as to whether this will be a hearing to take public testimony as to the impact of the smoking ban since implementation or to rescind the ban. Dr. Osler reiterated several times that because this is such a volatile subject we owe it to the Community to play out the process and have the hearing. It was also noted that the Aldermen sent down three resolutions and it is obvious that the public has a keen interest in this subject. The new hearing will create a forum for further testimony, which should satisfy all interested parties.

Dr. Osler made a motion to hold a public hearing to hear testimony on the smoking ban. The motion passed two to one. Dr. Osler and Ms. Mello voted in the affirmative and Ms. Patterson in opposition. The hearing will take place on Wednesday, March 24, 2004 @ 6:00 p.m. at the Police Academy Conference room at 220 Washington Street, Somerville, MA. Due to the fact that Ms. Patterson will be out of town on the day of the Public Hearing a request was made to videotape the meeting, which will be available for her viewing as well as for interested parties.

Hepatitis A:

Liz Quaratiello, the Public Health Nurse reported that there has been an outbreak since November 1, 2003. Those infected have mostly been (1) homeless (2) incarcerated or (3) injectable drug users.

She noted that the State is distributing free Hepatitis A vaccine and the Health Dept. will be the distribution agency for the City of Somerville. A vaccination protocol was developed to reach the high-risk population. The out reach will include Community groups who aim to reach these individuals wherever they are usually serviced. The intent is to vaccinate and pass out cards so as not to duplicate the inoculations. She also noted that there are only 8,000 doses available statewide.

Nail Salons:

Subject was tabled due to time constraints. It was noted that the Administrative Asst. will send out pertinent information to all Board members for review and Nail Salons will be brought up at the next meeting on April 22, 2004.

Somerville Cares About Prevention:

March 23, 2004 – Violence and Substance Abuse forum will take place at the East Somerville Community School 6:00-8:00 p.m..

April 14, 2004 – OxiContin forum will take place @ Somerville High School from 6:00-8:00 p.m..

Ms. Patterson asked to have Somerville Cares About Prevention representation at the next Board Meeting.

Meeting adjourned @ 6:10p.m.

Next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, April 22, 2004 @ 4.30 p.m. in the conference room @ 50 Evergreen Ave..

Respectfully submitted,

Rita VanSteensburg
Administrative Assistant